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26 MAY
1983

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director of Central Intelligence

FROM: Robert M. Gates
Deputy Director for Intelligence

SUBJECT: Andropov's Priorities

REFERENCE: [REDACTED]

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1. Action. No action required. [REDACTED]

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2. Background. In response to your question about Andropov's priorities, I asked SOVA for its comments, which follow below. [REDACTED]

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3. Andropov clearly is giving the Food Program at least as much attention as Brezhnev did during his last year in office. Statutes outlining the authority of the new agroindustrial associations--probably the most controversial aspect of the program--were issued shortly after Andropov assumed power, and a minister who opposed the reorganization was fired. A high degree of leadership attention to agriculture also has been suggested by the amount of coverage it receives in reports of the weekly Politburo meetings; an unusual agricultural conference that was attended by all able-bodied members of the leadership; and the new prominence of Mikhail Gorbachev, the party secretary responsible for agriculture. [REDACTED]

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5. It does not appear that Andropov's emphasis on the Food Program represents a departure from policies pursued under Brezhnev. Although the kinds of adjustments cited above could, if widespread, compound the problems already hampering military production, we have no evidence that Andropov's concentration on the food program has yet caused any significant displacement of the priority assigned to defense.

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Robert M. Gates

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SOVA/PA: (25 May 1983)

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